

VZCZCXYZ0016  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBU #0466/01 0711125  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 121125Z MAR 07  
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7490  
INFO RHMFISS/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL//SCJ2//  
RULGPIA/USCOMSOLANT

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 000466

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, I/GWHA, WHA, WHA/PDA, WHA/BSC,  
WHA/EPSC  
CDR USSOCOM FOR J-2 IAD/LAMA

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION; PRESIDENT BUSH'S TRIP TO LATIN AMERICA,  
03/09/07; BUENOS AIRES

#### 1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

International news pages today lead with President Bush's trip to Latin American, with stories dated from Sao Paulo, Montevideo and Washington DC.

#### 2. OPINION PIECES

"Lula bitterly criticizes the US shortly before Bush's arrival"

Eleonora Gosman, correspondent in Sao Paulo for the leading daily "Clarín", writes (03/09) "From his hotel room in Sao Paulo, US President George W. Bush is able to see the Villa Edit shantytown."

"Bush may probably be startled by the contrast between rich and poor, but the picture will be, at the end of the day, just a travel anecdote for him. For his Brazilian counterpart Lula, these contrasts are part of everyday life. That is why the Brazilian president again urged industrialized nations yesterday to 'promote' the development of the least advanced countries."

"In a speech yesterday, Lula dubbed the effects of protectionist policies in the US as 'dreadful'."

"... President Lula believes that there could be a commitment from the US within the next month to resume talks on farming subsidies. But Lula will not get one very concrete thing from Bush: the elimination of barriers on Brazil's ethanol exports to the US."

"Free trade"

Marcelo Cantelmi, head of the world news desk at the leading "Clarín", writes (03-09), "It is all less clear than it looks... This unprecedented trip is technically about bio-fuels. The summit in Brazil would therefore aim at launching a giant joint venture by the two largest ethanol producers in the world. But the US refuses to remove tariffs its slaps on Brazil's bio-fuels in order to protect its own industry. That contradiction is the source of Lula's anger yesterday, on the eve of President Bush's arrival."

"Uruguay: nobody wants Bush but everybody wants trade"

Nestor Restivo, special envoy to Montevideo for the leading daily "Clarín", reports (03/09) "US President George W. Bush gets here today and there will be protests, but the Uruguayan government wants to, above all, increase trade."

"Bush is, urbi et orbi, disliked. Only 12 percent of the people of Uruguay agree with his visit, according to a poll by Cifra. But 59 percent wants Uruguay to sign an FTA with the US."

"The people of Uruguay are visibly tired of the Mercosur trade bloc ... Uruguay is demanding more free play to broaden its trade scope throughout the world, with no restrictions."

"US mistrust of Argentina to deepen"

Hugo Alconada Mon, Washington correspondent for the daily-of-record "La Nacion", writes (03/09), "The anti-Bush rally Hugo Chavez is leading in Buenos Aires today with the thumbs up from the Casa Rosada will consolidate Washington's distrust of President Nestor Kirchner. It will not harm the bilateral relations, but it will reinforce the prevailing weariness, analysts and observers warned."

"Kirchner is usually seen as a leader that fluctuates according to his domestic needs between the most respected leftist leaders of the region, such as Lula da Silva, Tabare Vazquez and Michelle Bachelet, and the radicals like Hugo Chavez."

### 13. EDITORIALS

"Controversial tours"

The conservative daily La Prensa writes in an editorial (03/09), "The Latin American tour launched by President Bush seems to have revived a confrontation opened during the 2005 Summit of the Americas..."

"The US President comes to Latin America at the dusk of his term, weakened by a series of wars which have caused uncertainty to his country's economy."

"The Argentine government should not confuse politics and economics and should realize instead that the message behind Bush's trip is the preservation of the permanent interests of the United States in the region."

"Our country does not need automatic alignments but strategies seeking to fully develop its economic potential."

To see more Buenos Aires reporting, visit our classified website at:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/wha/buenosaires>

WAYNE